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ROWAN'S REACH

Boy with incurable illness inspires others to 'make the good'



Rowan Windham celebrates at the top of Enchanted Rock, which he said was the closest place to God he could climb, on June 14, 2016.

By Lisa Krantz
STAFF WRITER

The climb up Enchanted Rock was steep, but Rowan Windham wanted to make it to the top. The 425-foot trek was nothing compared to the challenges he had faced his whole life.

Born with a rare disorder, Rowan had endured dozens of surgeries, nearly constant battles with infections and more than 1,000 days in hospitals.

His mother, Carrie Windham, spent almost every hour, day and night, devoted to his care.

When he reached the crown of the granite dome, Rowan ran free like a normal boy — free of medicine, free of tubes, free of needle pokes and

Online

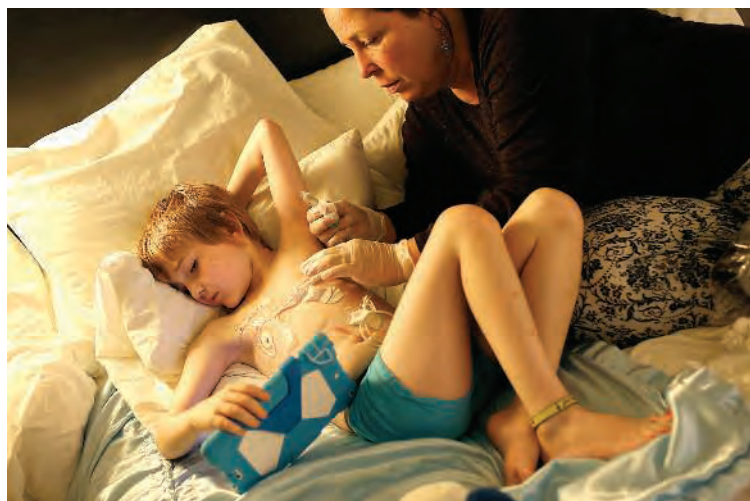
Videos and slideshow: Available Monday on ExpressNews.com

pain. He thought Enchanted Rock was the highest point in Texas and the closest place to God he could climb.

As the wind blew through his hair on that hot June morning last year, Rowan held up a sign thanking God and Jesus.

Then he held up another sign, telling the thousands of followers of his Facebook page, Rally for Rowan, that Carrie would be the donor for his upcoming bone marrow transplant. The operation was their last chance for him to get well.

Rowan died in Decem-



With Rowan exceptionally prone to infections where his tubes enter his body, mother Carrie Windham methodically cleans them at bedtime at Hotel Deca in Seattle on Nov. 7, 2015.

ber when he was 10, but his dedication to helping others reaches beyond his years. He continues to inspire those working to achieve his greatest wish, which is to get 1 million more matching bone marrow donors.

Every match could save the life of someone with a

little-known disease, like Rowan's, but also more common ones, like leukemia and lymphoma.

'Love your life'

With a mop of red hair, bright blue eyes and a face full of freckles, Rowan endeared himself

Little continues on A24

Afghan troops drop out of sight in S.A.

By Martin Kuz
STAFF WRITER

Afghan troops sent to the United States for training have disappeared from Joint Base San Antonio in higher numbers than from any other military installation in the country, a federal watchdog agency has found.

Sixty of the 152 Afghan personnel who went absent without leave in the U.S. between 2005 and March of this year fled from Lackland AFB or Fort Sam Houston, according to a recent report by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

Afghan trainees deserted at an overall rate of about one a month and accounted for almost half the 320 foreign military personnel who slipped away from two dozen bases across the country.

Some 6 percent of all Afghans enrolled in training programs later absconded, compared with a collective 0.07 percent of those from Iraq, Turkey, Yemen and other countries.

Nearly all of the 2,500 Afghan personnel who traveled to the U.S. for training first stopped in San Antonio for English-language courses at Lackland.

The SIGAR report showed the percentage of Afghan trainees who escaped more than doubled last year amid rising troop casualties and territorial gains by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The figures suggest the **Afghans continues on A21**

Booze fueled city during Prohibition

By Paul Stephen
STAFF WRITER

Neon lights, sequined flapper dresses, polished black Cadillacs with spoked rims and, of course, lots of clinking glasses in dimly lit basements.

Prohibition conjures plenty of romantic Cotton Club visions. They don't, however, paint an accurate picture of San Antonio during the dark, dry days from 1920 to 1933.

The city had speakeasies, but most of them were tucked



away in private homes on the edges of town. It also had gangsters — in fact San Antonio bore the moniker "Little Chicago" during Prohibition — but they often were just passing through with smuggled goods on well-traveled routes to and from Mexico.

And San Antonio had booze — so much booze — but it was being distilled and smuggled out or swigged in more secretive settings rather than stocking glamorous clubs.

And where there's ill-gotten hooch, there's guns to protect it, and the gunplay often turned lethal. Texas led the nation in killings related to Prohibition in 1929, with 114 of 1,380 victims nationwide.

Among those killed was seasoned Prohibition agent Charles Stevens. He died in a gunbattle with bootleggers on Pleasanton Road on Sept. 25, 1929, likely at the hands of bootlegger Lynn Stephens in the ambush. The arrests and

S.A. continues on A8

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